

ancients did. On this, as on all other subjects, we must, to succeed in our inquiries, fall back upon ourselves, and use our own judgments and feelings, enlightened and cultivated by every means at our command; and I think we are competent thus to settle it, without appeal to authority. A great deal of material, however, remains to us in the works of the past, and it is important to consider what use we should make of that which remains to us of the elements of ancient art in our sculptural decorations. We should, I think, use these elements when we thoroughly understand their nature and meaning, when we know all their relations and bearings, and thoroughly digest them mentally; just as a wise man takes the advice of another when he has made it his own opinion. Great caution is needful here: a great deal of discordancy, insipidity, or deadness arises from unenlightened or unfeeling appropriation of the elements of antiquity. There are stock ornaments, wreaths, festoons, honeysuckles, and the rest, which are by too many designers put up, not for their artistic value, not because they will express that idea they wish to express in that place, the idea that will be apposite; but just because they think something ought to be put there, and they have nothing else to put; like some fashionable phrase of the drawing-room introduced to stop the gaps in conversation. As silence in the one case would be more agreeable to a person of sense, so would blankness in the other to a man of discriminative taste and genuine feeling.

From unthinking adoption of ancient features, a great deal that is offensive and wrong in expression exists in our modern buildings. We have features both in our modern Gothic and modern Classic that should have been left to slumber in the ruins of antiquity, as they belong only to the past, as they are at variance with the present institutions and spirit of society, and have no echo in the breasts of the living generation. Such I consider, and I mention them because I think them pre-eminent in the display of bad taste and corrupted feeling, particularly when applied to church architecture, are the species of columns called Caryatides, by some looked upon as a distinct order. Human figures on the summit of a building are exalted; they are always beautiful in niches, to which in the Gothic architecture the canopy gives additional beauty and honour; but used as columns they are a degradation of humanity; and whether the account of Vitruvius as to the revengeful motive of their origin be true or false, they breathe of slavery, of Oriental subjection and abuse of the sex; and however classic their associations, however charming to the traveller in the porch of the Pandrossium, it is certainly not graceful to repeat them in England, where Christianity if not chivalry should have prevented their appearance.

Besides, there is an incongruity in their employment as columns, and the objections that have been made against them from time to time by different writers are not by any means of too matter-of-fact a character for fine-art criticism. Caryatides are ornaments, as all statues are; but for a support as a column, we want, not a symbol or an ornament, but a real thing,—a solid body capable of endurance. A thing representing a natural object cannot take a primary office in architecture, except for a small corbel or the like. Some have called them beautiful absurdities; but the phrase, applied to such features, is a contradiction; for it is not the eye alone that is to be gratified in architecture: its real ornaments, like pearls, are from the deep; for architecture appeals to the understanding, and is dependant on the reflective powers of the spectator for its effect on his mind. To profound feeling, therefore, for the beautiful we should join calm and fearless reasoning. In real architecture, reason must reign, and no absurdity can be admitted there.

In Caryatides, beauty there undoubtedly is, but it is in the statue, not in its application: beauty which the misuse of the figure only obscures and diminishes.

The objection here made to Caryatides applies with but little softening to Perses or Per-

sians,—the employment of male figures. They are all of them absurd, and uncalled for by exigency, either æsthetic or physical, by any legitimate motive in architectural design. If no ancient authority existed for their introduction, we should not have been offended by their employment in modern Europe. He would be a bold man, I take it, who, unsupported by authority, would venture to represent a lady groaning under the weight of an entablature as a substitute for a column in the present day.

We are misled in our choice and adoption of ancient ornament by association. We naturally connect the idea of beauty with whatever is worn by a graceful person; and from the same feeling, elements in themselves very indifferent, but attached to some noble building, come to be linked in most minds with images of beauty. Our prime and safest source of ornament is nature herself, and human life and history. The poet holds the mirror up to nature and life, and so according to his powers must the architect, whose art not only can yield majestic and beautiful images of nature, refined by human fancy and feeling, but may have sympathy by its mysterious forms, its groupings and combinations, its sunlight and its gloom, with the triumphs and woes, the hopes and the conflicts of humanity. Of old the sculptor and the architect luxuriated in the mazes of the poet's fancy, and the sculptor's hand realised in stone the bright imagery of the poet's dream. The magic charms, too, of geometry, creating as it were a world from nothing, were not wanting. These sources of decoration are yet unsealed, and there are wide fields for their display, wider than is generally conceived. Some edifices may be covered with tracery, and sculpture, so long as it be kept broad and delicate, and not suffered to interfere with the main lines, as it too often does in modern works, and subvert the great divisions of the design. Richness and simplicity are not inimical to each other; minuteness of ornament need not destroy grandeur, for they are combined in many of our older structures. In the exterior of Henry the Seventh's Chapel, for instance, you may fix your eye upon any main feature of the building, buttress or what not, and contemplate its form and proportions, quite undisturbed by the delicate detail, so completely does the latter keep its place. Let any architect compare this building with its new neighbour the Palace of Westminster, where the too often obtrusive detail interferes with the simplicity and beauty of the design, and he will see at once the difference to which I would call attention, between ancient and modern works in this respect.

I have, in the preceding remarks, confined my illustration of principle chiefly to the present dominant system of Ecclesiastical Architecture. I do not, however, recognise that style as the only one meet or worthy to enshrine the religion of the day. All art and nature are open to the architect, who, like the poet, should free himself from the prejudices of his country and day, and be superior to time and place, becoming thereby a general instead of a local man; and not a British or a French, but a world-architect. I consider one of the impediments to the advancement of art generally, is the bigotry and tyranny of fashion and opinion, that would limit the resources of the artist to any one style. To the ecclesiastical architect I believe this limitation must be peculiarly prejudicial, as it shuts him out from the use of elements peculiarly fitted to the expression of solemn and religious ideas, belonging to a style capable of the highest development and the most glorious and sublime significance. In a former paper I suggested the Greek periptery as being a fit type for the sacred edifices of the day. I did so because I consider it the grandest and most solemn form,—the one most sacred in its expression that any architectural elements can assume. This I think, in the absence of prejudice, would soon be acknowledged. But alas! the architecture and the paganism of the sacred edifices of the Greeks have been spoken of as if they were not distinct and separable. Now, no true architecture can share the fate of

paganism, or be bound to the destiny of any creed whatever. Art is indissolubly linked to humanity, and universal in its application: but though eminently religious, and fit to be associated with and to minister to the purest and holiest forms of religion in the world, yet its expression is too broad to permit it to be wrested in favour of any particular creed or ritual, with which it can only be connected in the minds of individuals, by an arbitrary and accidental association of ideas. The true artist must be indebted to all styles, but what he extracts will rise to him divested of all the local peculiarities, extraneous, historical, and temporary adjuncts. That the Greek elements cannot be thus separated and combined in new forms, otherwise than as in the Greek temples, and made to serve and embellish other plans consistent with the fulfilment of the conditions of original and truthful architecture, is a position too absurd, I think, to merit reply. The Greeks themselves combined them otherwise, and he who cannot do so too is no architect. If the richest products of the human mind should be laid on the altar of religion, then our sacred architecture must be commensurate with our ideal of structural art; and the genius of Greek design must also be pressed into its service and made to minister to the religious sentiment.

Let it not be supposed that I am hostile to the system so much preferred to it. I believe it is equally based on principles of our nature, and answers to emotions that are common to our race. Pursued in the spirit of its inventors and first practitioners, by men who could prove themselves their true successors, and instead of pushing it back, would carry it on, in the manner its originators would themselves have carried it on, under new circumstances, using its elements only as instruments of emotion, Gothic architecture might run a new and illustrious career. I say I am not hostile to this system of our forefathers: it would be unnatural to be so, I am only claiming for the Greek architecture what I conceive to be its rights, and which I think have never been fully urged. All that Gothic architecture is, it has been declared to be, by its able modern advocates; and it has had ample justice meted to it: while the Greek, on the contrary, has been the victim of prejudice, of half views, and of illogical conclusions. Admit the Greek architecture to a participation in the ministry of art to religion, and we may then, and not till then, be said to have required some portion of our obligation to Greek genius. It is the seed of all that we have known of greatness in architecture, and we are architects only in proportion as we feel its beauty and fathom its source.

In choosing a style for a sacred edifice, we should consider which is best fitted *naturally*, and adopt that which, by its intrinsic qualities, is most capable of producing solemn impressions, whatever its associations may be, or however deficient in associations of a certain kind. The test of any one style in reference to this qualification is the consideration, not how it affects some particular section or class of men, through the medium of its history, its accidental and individual associations, but how it stands related to human nature by its intrinsic and essential qualities, by its universal, unchanging, and imperishable associations.

Has this been the test applied? Have not personal associations been confounded with, and allowed to have all the weight of, natural laws, to the impediment and great detriment of art?

For what are the ecclesiastical structures erecting in our day? Their types or originals were admirable as works of art; there was truth, feeling, spirit, life in them; they were built by men who were true successors of their predecessors; who were led to that style and mode of construction by the nature of their materials, by the dictates of their science, by their social status, their form of worship: the style of the original buildings was the natural result, the blossoming, as it were, of the structural science or constructive principles which guided their formation. But the imitations want structural consistency and other qualities of real architecture. Our religion points to